

Who's Who In Public Relations

Detailed Listing of Ireland's
Premier PR Consultancies and
the Views of Agency Principals

NIGEL HENEGHAN	Heneghan PR	p62
DAN PENDER	PR360	p62
ANN-MARIE O'SULLIVAN	AM O'Sullivan PR	p63
MICK O'KEEFFE	Teneo PSG	p64
JANE McDAID	THINKHOUSE	p64
PAT WALSH	Murray	p66
NIAMH BOYLE	The Reputations Agency	p67
ANNE-MARIE CURRAN	Drury Porter Novelli	p68
EIMEAR HURLEY	Carr Communications	p69
SIOBHAN MOLLOY	Weber Shandwick	p70
MARI O'LEARY	O'Leary PR	p70
JENNY CULLEN	Revolve Marketing & PR	p71
PAUL ALLEN	Paul Allen & Associates	p72
REBECCA BURRELL	Burrell Marketing & Publicity	p72
CAROLINE HEYWOOD	Walsh:PR	p73
PAUL HAYES	Beachhut PR	p74
SHARON BANNERTON	Bannerton	p75
CONOR HORGAN	Horgan PR & Marketing	p76
CATHY RIORDAN	PR Wise	p76
OWEN CULLEN	Cullen Communications	p77
LORNA JENNINGS	Hanover Ireland	p77
LYNN HUNTER	Hunter Communications	p78
RÓISÍN O'HEA	O'Hea PR	p78
KATHRYN BYRNE	Limelight Communications	p79
RACHEL DALTON	Rachel Dalton Communications	p80





Reputation Management

Reputation management for companies and brands has become more challenging. **Emily Styles** finds out from leading PR practitioners about handling social media

Maintaining a digital presence on social media leaves businesses considerably exposed to the vagaries of the public gaze. That can be a good thing if you are siphoning insights out of real-time consumer conversations about your brand. But social media also attracts individuals with axes to grind, and they'll eagerly start swinging at you on Twitter and Facebook.

In the social media limelight, minor business issues can escalate into problems quickly. However, these same online channels also provide ways to manage the situation. Lidl was praised for how it used social media during and after the looting of its store in Tallaght during Storm Emma. The supermarket was by turns self-deprecating and serious as the events unfolded, keeping customers informed on Twitter of what was happening.

By contrast, British pub chain Wetherspoons recently announced that it

was shutting down its social media pages due to bad publicity and the time required to manage them. Other companies battered recently by snowballing social media anger include Starbucks and Just Eat, who struggled to keep on top of incidents that 'went viral' on Twitter.

Most of Ireland's public relations agencies offer reputation management as part of their service. For companies that want to dive into social media, their general advice is to ensure you are sufficiently prepared beforehand.

Anne-Marie Curran, managing director of Drury Porter Novelli, says that the biggest issue with businesses embracing social media involves not acknowledging the potential risks.

"People are missing a beat on the business front if they don't recognise the importance of threats to their business reputation," says Curran, adding that once the importance of a business's reputation

is acknowledged, preparation should be the next step. This involves identifying potential threats to a business and having a plan in place to deal with them.

"People are much more likely to retweet negative and false information if it reinforces prejudices or thoughts they may have had about a brand over a period of time. They are also more likely to retweet what they want to be true," says Curran.

"Often in times of threat or crisis, companies can project uncertainty or a lack of confidence in leadership. Our job with our clients is to ensure that all of the board and executive team are prepared and communicate clearly and honestly."

Teneo PSG advises its major clients on crisis preparedness and provides training in this area. According to chief executive **Mick O'Keefe**: "Social media is a hugely important factor in how companies prepare for and manage crisis situations that may potentially damage their reputation.

"In 2018, social media and digital will evolve to no longer being a standalone division or a 'thing' – it will become front

'Issues can escalate far quicker and reach far further than before'

PAT WALSH
 Managing Director
 Murray

ACTIVITY Activity levels are right back to peak levels but requirements today are much more considered. Investment by corporate and brand 'Ireland' is much more strategic and outcome-focused, with very little tolerance for the hubris or scatter-gun approach of the boom. It feels a lot more mature and nuanced, and centred in a more senior advisory space.

FDI, tech and pharma remained strong in the downturn, and agri and food led the recovery, which has now extended into finance, motor, leisure, consumer spending and, latterly, retail.

The past year has seen a notable uptick in M&A, refinancing and equity raisings. On the consumer side, there was a resurgence in spending on food and drink, entertainment and leisure, and health and beauty.

PR STRATEGY A proper understanding of stakeholder needs, concerns or interests is crucial. You also need a credible proposition that is relevant and understandable, and experience or proof points to gain trust. Someone new to PR first needs to test or validate the proposition, as no words or PR can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Some advance self-reflection may save an organisation's cash and blushes later on.

MEDIA MIX This is certainly changing, and to an extent it varies with age and demographics. Whereas non-digital remains a critical and trusted opinion-former, for youth brands its relevance is declining rapidly. That said, we don't see it as either/or; we've always seen traditional and digital as natural bedfellows. Our latest #murraytweetindex shows that Twitter is being turned to by an

'Public relations can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear'



increasing number of mainstream journalists to signpost their news, views and analysis on more trusted and expansive platforms.

WHY PR? PR can help to deliver your goals. It doesn't always require agency support or significant financial investment, but it does

require investment of thought and time to create understanding with key stakeholders. Sometimes that may require as little as a cup of coffee, but it might also require judgement, relationships and capacity that may not be readily available in-house.

walshpr.ie

walsh:PR
 communication / innovation / reputation

- Helping you **communicate** strategically and effectively, whatever the medium.
- Striving for constant **innovation**, we bring a fresh approach to every small thing we do.
- Enhancing your **reputation** with effective communications programmes.

† +353 1 661 3515 • info@walshpr.ie • @WalshPRireland



DEPARTMENTS

- 2 Editor's Note**
- 4 Business Beat**
- 32 Funds**
- 33 Markets Insight**
- 34 Subscriptions**
- 36 Business News**
- 38 Buy & Sell**
- 39 Media & Marketing**
- 50 Startups**
- 54 View From The Top**
- 84 Motoring**
- 86 Health Check**
- 87 Events Diary**
- 88 Top Ten**



Evoke.ie
39



World Without Mind 28



Ambr Eyewear
52



Chris Zook
54



SalesOptimize 8



Bean & Goose 51



Brexit Briefing 40



Community Employment 10
Motoring 84



COVER STORIES



56 Public Relations

Ireland's top PR firms explain why reputation management is now a priority for clients, and why good marketing strategies involve a blend of digital and traditional media



14 Conviviality

Six months ago the market valued UK drinks distributor Conviviality plc at £740m. Then the company ran out of cash and C&C Group swooped to buy itself a bargain



18 Noel Moran

The Meath entrepreneur saw the potential in fintech a decade ago before it became trendy. Now Prepaid Financial Services is a leading European player in e-money



22 Young Entrepreneurs

There's a lot of government propaganda that encourages young people to start their own business. Here's how six of the best startups from 2014 have been faring

ALSO INSIDE

8 SalesOptimize

Liz Fulham's sales-lead-generation venture has racked up big losses, but taxpayers and private investors are keeping faith

10 Community Employment

CE schemes have become so ingrained that Fianna Fáil insists their supervisors should get civil-service pensions

28 World Without Mind

American journalist Franklin Foers's new book highlights the hubris in the Silicon Valley mindset and how it might be challenged

35 Pensions Gap

Men tend to be much better off financially than women in retirement, but the imbalance can be addressed

39 Evoke.ie

The women's website has rapidly grown its audience over the past year thanks to strong content and ruthless analytics

40 Brexit Briefing

With less than a year to go before the UK formally leaves the EU, there are plenty of supports for Irish SMEs looking to prepare

51 Bean & Goose

Waterford sisters Natalie and Karen Keane make tasty chocolate with local ingredients. Companies can visit their farm to try it too

84 Volvo V90

The new Volvo V90 is the last word in estate car luxury, though the range would benefit from a six-cylinder engine

86 Sleep

Two-thirds of adults don't enjoy sufficient sleep. Mobile phones and tablets are partly to blame

BRINGING THE DATA BARONS TO HEEL

Business *Plus*

€2.95
Sterling £2.50

MAY 2018

BizPlus.ie

**NOEL
MORAN**

**Navan's Amazing
Fintech Pioneer**



CONVIVIALITY

**How It Fell
Into C&C's Lap**

**MANAGING
REPUTATION**

**Best advice
from Ireland's
top PR agencies**



Paul Hayes, Beachhut PR

